



First Nations Child & Family Caring Society of Canada

@Caringsociety CaringSociety fncaringsociety

Winter 2017

Stay in touch!
@SpiritBear

Spirit Bear's Year in Review

Spirit Bear was gifted to the Caring Society by Carrier Sekani Family Services in 2008 and has since become a much loved reconciliation ambassador. Spirit Bear has been hard at work teaching children, youth, and caring adults all over the country on how they can implement the TRC's Calls to Action. Here are some highlights from 2017.

Spirit Bear Receives an Honorary Barrister Degree



Spirit Bear attended all of the hearings related to the Canadian Human Rights case on First Nations child welfare. In recognition of Spirit Bear's participation in the case, Osgoode Hall Law School gave him an honorary law degree and granted him the title of *Barrister*! Shortly after, Spirit Bear was admitted to the *bear* by the Indigenous Bar Association.

The Spirit Bear Plan

Spirit Bear announced his plan to end inequalities in public services for First Nations children, youth, and families. To learn more visit fncaringsociety.com/spirit-bear-plan

2018 Calendar and Guide to Reconciliation

Featuring a year of free and fun reconciliation-based activities for people of all ages! Special thanks to UNIFOR and creators Josh and Robin McLeod. Order your copy at info@fncaringsociety.com for \$15 plus shipping.



Book Launch: Spirit Bear and Children Make History

Spirit Bear is *beary* excited to announce the release of his first children's book! Order your copy at info@fncaringsociety.com for \$15 plus shipping.

When Spirit Bear's mom tells him about an important human rights case happening in Ottawa, Ontario, he makes the LONG trip (by train, his favourite way to travel) to go and watch, and to stand up for First Nations kids.

And he isn't the only one! Lots of children come too—to listen, and to show they care. Spirit Bear knows that children can change the world because he's there to see it happen.

This is the story of how kids—kids just like you—made a difference ... with a bit of help from some bears and other animals along the way!

-Written by Cindy Blackstock and Eddy Robinson.
Illustrated by Amanda Strong and Spotted Fawn Productions.



Reconciling History

The Caring Society is hard at work with our partners at the City of Ottawa to expand our Reconciling History initiative by creating a fun and interactive walking route in downtown Ottawa. Each stop along the route will present an opportunity to educate the public about the role of non-Indigenous peoples and governments in residential schools and the evergreen lessons we can glean from history to address contemporary injustices experienced by Indigenous peoples. Reconciling History is the act of teaching our children and the public the complete and true story of the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada. All Canadians – and especially the generations to come – deserve to have a better understanding of what we need to do in this country to restore justice. 🌱



The Reconciling History walking tour will feature opportunities for reflection at historic locations throughout the City of Ottawa.



Congratulations

to Sébastien Grammond!

The Caring Society was thrilled to learn that Sébastien Grammond, a member of our *pro bono* legal team for five years, has been appointed to the Federal Court as a judge. We can't imagine a more deserving appointee! Thank you Sébastien, for your compassionate dedication and support of culturally based equity for First Nations children, youth, and their families! 🐻

Sébastien Grammond with his good friends, Spirit Bear (right) and Era Bear (left).



Save the Date for Have a Heart Day

2018

Have a Heart Day is an annual national reconciliation event on **February 14** to call on the government to stop its racial discrimination against First Nations kids. Each year thousands of Canadians stand in solidarity with First Nations children and youth for their right to a happy and healthy childhood. This includes culturally based education, the right to grow up at home, be proud of who they are, and receive equitable access to public services.

Have a Heart Day is your chance to get involved; no matter where you live, you can participate! Hold an event in your community and show children that you care. You can register your event at fncaringsociety.com/have-a-heart-registration-2018. Use the hashtags #HaveaHeartDay and #JournéeAyezUnCoeur to help spread the word! ❤️

Right: Memories from Have a Heart Day 2017 on Parliament Hill.





Jordan's Principle

Ensuring First Nations Children Receive the Public Services They Need When They Need Them

What is Jordan's Principle?

Jordan's Principle is a child-first principle named in memory of Jordan River Anderson. Jordan was a First Nations child from Norway House Cree Nation in Manitoba. Born with complex medical needs, Jordan spent more than two years unnecessarily in hospital while the Province of Manitoba and the federal government argued over who should pay for his at-home care. Jordan died in the hospital at the age of five years old, never having spent a day in his family home.

Jordan's Principle ensures that First Nations children can access all public services when they need them. Services need to be culturally based and take into full account the historical disadvantage that many First Nations children live with. The government of first contact pays for the service and resolves jurisdictional/payment disputes later.

Why is Jordan's Principle important?

Payment disputes within and between federal and provincial or territorial governments over services for First Nations children are not uncommon. First Nations children are frequently left waiting for services they desperately need, or are denied services that are available to other children. This includes services in education, health, early childhood services, recreation, and culture and language. Jordan's Principle calls on the government of first contact to pay for the services without delay and seek reimbursement later so the child does not get tragically caught in the middle of government red tape.

What did the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal say about Jordan's Principle?

The Canadian Human Rights Tribunal is a legal institution whose mandate is to adjudicate cases where there has been an alleged breach of the *Canadian Human Rights Act*. In 2016,

the Tribunal found that the Canadian Government is racially discriminating against 165,000 First Nations children and their families for its failure to provide equitable services, including the proper implementation of Jordan's Principle. The Tribunal has issued a series of legally binding orders which Canada has an obligation to fulfill. Highlights of the orders are:

- apply Jordan's Principle to all First Nations children living on and off reserve;
- apply Jordan's Principle based on the needs of the child (not just limited to the normative standard of care);
- ensure that administrative procedures do not delay service provision; and
- respond to most cases within 48 hours.

To report a Jordan's Principle case or find out more contact **1-800-567-9604**.

To learn more about Jordan's Principle visit jordansprinciple.ca 🐻

Reconciliation Ambearssadors Coming in the New Year!

The Reconciliation Ambearssadors Program invites groups to host one of our Reconciliation Ambearssadors (ambassadors) who will guide you through a year of free ways to make a difference for First Nations children and promote the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action. Hosting groups are urged to "teach" the bear Indigenous languages and stories, and make sure it joins in cultural activities so it becomes a well known Reconciliation Ambearssador in the community! Bears are already visiting groups as far away as Australia!

Reconciliation Ambearssadors Program



New documentary!

It Takes All of Us to Enforce the Law

The Caring Society is thrilled to announce the release of a new documentary on the First Nations child welfare case at the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal. Featuring interviews with the Caring Society's *pro bono* legal team, the film explores the history and significance of the case through a legal lens. Thoughtful and engaging, this film is a *must watch* for legal professionals, educators, activists, and young people alike. Available mid-December via our YouTube channel **fncaringsociety!**

The Caring Society gratefully acknowledges the Law Society of Upper Canada for support for this film. II



A Beautiful Evening in Winnipeg: 9th Annual Caring Society Gala

The annual Caring Society Gala is always magical, and 2017 was one of the best events yet! Hosted by the First Nations child welfare agencies of Manitoba, the sold-out crowd of 400+ was treated to a four-course meal, incredible live entertainment and amazing auction items, all in support of equity for First Nations children. The Caring Society extends its warmest appreciation to the Volunteer Committee for coordinating this year's gala and a heartfelt thank you to everyone who attended. Your support is needed now more than ever as we continue to push for equity across all government services for First Nations children and families. 🐻

Happy Holidays

*To you and your family,
the Caring Society wishes
peace, love & happiness
for the holidays and always!*



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Membership Information

If you would like to join the First Nations Child & Family Caring Society as a Member under one of the following categories:

- Individual Membership: \$75
- Student Membership with ID or Elder: \$5
- Small FNCFCS Agency Membership (1–50 employees): \$500
- Large FNCFCS Agency Membership (50+ employees): \$1,000
- Small Associate Membership (Organizations with 1–50 employees): \$500
- Large Associate Membership (Organizations with 50+ employees): \$1,000

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